

CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM REPORT FOR FFY 2002

Before the passage of the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 (also referred to as the Chafee Act), Missouri's foster youth, ages 13-21 received services through the Independent Living Program. The Division of Family Services (DFS) provided services for young adolescents, ages 13-15, through the Choices program and supported youth, ages 18-21, using state funds. Youth between the ages of 16 and 18 received independent services allowable through the initial federal legislation. Since the passage, the state plan was amended to serve foster youth, ages 13 –21, regardless of their permanency plan, youth transitioning and those who have left foster care after age 18. Foster care youth, ages 13-15 are served through the Chafee Choices program. Youth, ages 16-21 are served through the Chafee Independent Living and former foster care youth are served through Chafee Aftercare.

Missouri's philosophy and emphasis continues to be on positive youth development, empowerment, and leadership. We embrace these approaches and believe they go beyond the occasional youth involvement. Every effort is made to involve youth at the planning, design and implementation of independent living services. We know youth who are involved in their case planning and in the designing of services have more confidence in their ability to succeed and becoming self-sufficient.

- 1. The following is a description of the Chafee services provided and activities conducted, including programs, modified, expanded or newly establish, current efforts, and other activities undertaken to achieve the purpose set forth in section 477(b)(3)(F) of the Act.**

State Level Coordination

Chafee funds are used to fund one state level coordinator position. The responsibilities of the state coordinator include program management and coordination, program and policy development, resource development, training, administrative and budgetary oversight, and technical assistance.

Area/Sub-Area Level coordination

Chafee funds are also used to staff the 12 Independent Living Program (ILP) Specialists located throughout the state. The Specialists work directly and together with the youth, case manager, foster parents, and contracted providers. They are responsible for local program coordination, service delivery, community resource development, contractor compliance, on-going consultation and training to agency staff, foster parents, and other providers. They provide direct services to youth in skill assessments, life skills training in a classroom setting and through experiential learning through seminars, camps, retreats, and conferences.

Access to the Chafee Independence Program is commonly made by a referral for Life Skills instruction by the case manager, foster parents or other placement providers, juvenile court and/or by ILP staff (employee or contracted provider). Former foster youth may be referred by their former case manager, former foster parents or placement providers, other agencies, and/or by self-referral. The assessment tool used to determine a youth strengths/needs is the

Daniel Memorial Independent Living Assessment for Life Skills. ILP staff and Choices contractors designed a pre/post test to be used as an assessment tool for youth, ages 13-15.

Chafee Choices

DFS has provided services to younger adolescents, ages 13-15 using a combination of state and federal Chafee funds. The ability to be self-sufficient rests on skills learned during the early teenage years. As children develop, they acquire skills through exposure and working with others. Choices is a pre-independent living life skills instruction program focused on soft skills with emphasis on healthy relationship building, self-esteem and community involvement. The learning activity primarily takes place in the classroom setting, but experiential learning is made available through seminars. Each Area determines the frequency of seminars. Contracted providers are used to provide program coordination in most areas of the state. We have not been successful in contracting with providers for the central and northeast (Area 2) region of the state due to lack of appropriate providers. The ILP Specialists assigned to this region provide the necessary services. There are approximately 2,500 youth eligible for Choices services at any given time. We currently have the capacity to serve approximately 50 percent of this population and 1,019 youth were enrolled in pre-independent living life skills classes.

Chafee Independent Living

There is an array of services available and a continuum of support for foster care youth between the ages of 16 and 21 to assist them in transitioning out of care and reaching self-sufficiency. For most people, life skills training occur informally in the home. Foster care youth seem to need much support and many resources to develop skills necessary for independent living. We believe there are three major components to self-sufficiency: life skills, education, and employment. Life skills training is a large component of Missouri's Independent Living Program. During fiscal year 2002, 3,924 youth between the ages of 16-21 were in foster care. Independent living services were provided to 2,665 youth, although a small number of the youth count may be duplicated due to youth moving from one area to another and being counted in each area. Services provided include life skills and driver education training. Summer camps, seminars, ropes courses, and computer camps were made available throughout the state. Many youth participated on state and area advisory boards and received tutoring, mentoring, tuition, educational and other support services. Seventeen hundred and thirty-seven (1734) youth were enrolled in life skills training.

Chafee Aftercare

Youth who exited foster care at age 18 or after, but have not reached age 21 are eligible for Aftercare services. Missouri recognizes and respects the wishes of our young adults who are eligible for services but do not wish to participate. The goal is to compliment the youth's efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure they recognize and accept personal responsibility in making the transition from adolescence to adulthood. During this fiscal year, 137 youth received Aftercare services including crisis funds, room and board services, educational, training assistance, and support services.

Life Skills Assessment and Curriculum

Missouri requires a life skills assessment for all youth referred to ILP. The assessment provides the ILP Specialist, case manager, and care provider information on the youth's level of functioning. These assessments serve as the basis for planning and can help reinforce the collaborative relationship between the youth and the caregiver. Currently, Missouri uses the Daniel Memorial Independent Living Assessment for Life Skills. DFS is in the process of examining and reviewing the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment for assessing all youth. The Ansell-Casey assessment consists of four different versions for four suggested age ranges.

A basic curriculum is used statewide. The curriculum was designed to have the flexibility to adapt modules to meet the youth's cultural and geographic needs. The curriculum lists resources for instructional materials, simple life skills activities and addresses goals and objectives for the following skills category:

- Communication skills
- Self-esteem
- Community Resources
- Transportation
- Housing
- Educational/Vocational Planning
- Employment
- Money Management
- Home Management
- Health
- Legal Issues

Group size depends on the availability of youth in the given area. In order to provide quality services, the groups are recommended to be maintained at a minimum of six (6) with a maximum of fifteen (15).

Youth Involvement

DFS recognizes the importance of and remains committed to youth involvement and development. Youth who have successfully completed the life skills training may be used and paid as contractors to serve as graduate assistant or co-facilitators in life skills training. When possible, youth are asked to assist in foster parent STARS pre-service and in-service trainings. Other trainings include Transitional Living Advocate and Court Appointed Special Advocates. Youth are often invited to participate and speak on youth panels, facilitate and lead conference workshops. Youth on the State Youth Advisory Board host and design the entire annual state youth conference. Workshops and conference activities are generally lead by the youth.

State and Area Youth Advisory Boards

Missouri's philosophy for its youth in care is one of empowerment, leadership and responsibility. DFS continues to fund activities that provide youth with opportunities to enhance their self-esteem, to be supportive of each other, and to development a sense of

empowerment and control in their lives. One opportunity is the formation of the Area and State Youth Advisory Boards. DFS established and support the development of Area Youth Advisory Boards (AYAB) in all seven administrative areas and a State Youth Advisory Board (SYAB). AYABs consist of youth and alumni of life skills groups. SYAB is comprised of youth and alumni from throughout the state who represent their respective AYABs. The purpose of SYAB is to provide youth with an opportunity to give policy and procedural input to DFS staff, provide meaningful leadership training and experiences for board members, and empower board members who, in turn can empower other youth in out-of-home care. SYAB meets on a quarterly basis. AYABs meet monthly or quarterly depending the projects they are working on.

AYAB and SYAB members have been involved in panel presentations and various state/area conferences regarding what the Independent Living Program has meant to them and how it can make a difference. Other involvement includes:

- Meeting with legislators during the Annual Child Advocacy Day and other significant legislative days to provide information and advocate for foster care and independent living services.
- Speaking at community and agency meetings to provide information about foster care and adoption issues.
- Assisting with training of new DFS staff, foster parents, transitional living and other issues.
- Apply and participate in other community youth boards or councils.
- Organize and participate in appreciation events for foster and adoptive parents.
- Peer counseling.
- Organize and design area and state youth conferences.
- Community service projects or projects involving younger foster children.
- Providing independent living information to foster parents, juvenile court staff, and other youth.

Educational and Training Assistance

Early and on-going support for education is extremely important in preparing youth for self-sufficiency. Setting and monitoring educational goals will assist youth in understanding the importance of having a vision of educational success. At a minimum all youth should have a GED as a goal. Requirements for assistance are:

- Any foster and former foster youth who are interested in pursuing higher education and was eligible for Chafee services may qualify for the educational and training assistance.
- Youth must be currently enrolled in or a graduate of a life skills group;
- Youth must demonstrate academic success or motivation in school (generally a “C” average or its equivalency or as otherwise agreed upon with the plan) or in training program;
- Youth must be accepted to an accredited college/university and vocational school or certified training program;
- Appropriate scholarships, grants and other financial assistance must be explored and utilized, and;

- There must be reasonable assurance the youth will graduate for the educational or training program.

One hundred fourteen foster care and 23 Aftercare youth received educational and training services, totaling \$ 257,335.56.

Community Partnerships

Missouri Mentoring Partnership

The Missouri Mentoring Partnership (MMP) is structured around an alliance between the public and private sectors. MMP sites implement structured work site and community mentoring opportunities for youth. There are ten community partnership sites in Missouri. Its program goal is to assist young people, through mentored employment and support, gain and develop work experience and ethics. MMP staff provides resource coordination for participants and volunteer mentors are recruited from the community. Mentors provide positive role modeling, friendship and guidance around employment and parenting issues to youth who are entering the workplace or have become parents. The objectives of MMP are to encourage continuation of education and to provide employment opportunities enhanced through mentoring.

At risk youth are at greater risk to become unemployed as adults. DFS refers these youth, ages 16-21 through an application process. MMP also accepts referrals for at-risks and teen parenting youth from youth services, schools and the health department. An application is submitted and reviewed by MMP staff. MMP staff contacts youth for the interview/assessment process and determines which youth are appropriate for the program. Before youth are assigned a mentor or can begin a job search, they must complete 20-30 hours of job readiness training. This training consists of “soft skills”, resume preparation, and mock interviews. There is a deemed level of pass/fail for each of the three components. Once they have passed and been assigned, mentors are asked to give a one-year commitment. MMP provided services to approximately 1,500 foster care and other at-risk youth, including teen parenting youth in SFY 02.

Jim Casey Youth Opportunity Initiative

The Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative (JCYOI) is a national endeavor to assist youth in foster care make successful transitions to self-sufficiency and independence. JCYOI will work to bring together people and resources needed to assist youth make the necessary contacts they need for employment, education, housing, health care, and supportive personal and community connections. In an effort to improve outcomes for youth leaving foster care JCYOI will partner with communities in several states to accomplish three key strategies: youth leadership boards, community partnership boards, and Opportunity Passports. JCYOI began partnering with Missouri in December 2001 with two sites: Kansas City and the metropolitan St. Louis area. DFS will continue to work with JCYOI to assist them in educating the communities to support foster youth and to understand the importance of involving youth in the decision making process that affects their lives. JCYOI’s purpose is to accomplish three key strategies: youth leadership boards, community partnership boards, and Opportunity Passports. The

Opportunity Passport is designed to organize resources and create opportunities for foster and Aftercare youth. It assists youth in accumulating assets and direct experience with money management. Youth who apply and are selected to receive a Passport will receive an individual development account (a matched savings account), a personal debit account, and a variety of available community services at preferred rates.

Transitional Living Program

The Transitional Living Program (TLP) offers different living situations for youth ages 16 and older to practice the life skills training they received in the classroom setting. Ideally TLP offers experience for youth from a more restrictive to a less restrictive setting, based on the readiness of the youth. These living situations allow for some autonomy but still provide the needed support and supervision that will increase the likelihood of self-sufficiency. TLP placement options are supported through state revenue and include:

Transitional Living Advocate – (TLA)

The Transitional Living Advocate is an adult, 21 years of age or older, who provides the youth a safe place to stay, opportunity to practice the life skills learned through the classroom setting, encouragement and guidance in regard to employment, education and/or training, and preparation for successful transition from DFS custody. The advocate must complete the following prior to approval:

- Successful completion of 18 hours of pre-service, specialized training on adolescent issues through DFS;
- A criminal record check and child abuse/neglect background screening;
- An approved home study completed by the DFS case manager/service worker, in the county that the advocate resides; and
- Register with the Family Care Safety Registry.

The ILP Specialist, DFS case manager, youth, and the TLA (if identified) meet to design a transitional living plan or review the current case plan and determine if this is the most appropriate placement. The youth must be at least 16 years old and be currently attending or successfully completed life skills training. Youth are encouraged to have pre-placement visits with an approved advocate to increase the likelihood of a successful match. Once the TLA placement occurs, the youth receives \$586 per month maintenance: \$450 per month of this is paid by the youth to the advocate for food, rent and other expenses related to assisting the youth to learn to live independently. The youth uses the remaining \$136 per month for other expenses such as clothing, school, work, personal hygiene, transportation, etc. For State Fiscal Year (SFY) 02, 47 youth were placed in TLA homes.

Transitional Living Group Home (TLG)

A licensed, residential, child care site where older youth (ages 16-20) concentrate on preparation for independent living and completion of their educational/vocational programs in a supervised group setting. Youth typically have been residing in a residential treatment facility. Youth are expected to maintain employment and develop goals and plans for their future. Youth must be at least 16 years old and be currently

attending or successfully completed life skills training. All facilities that are contracted as TLP group homes are licensed as residential child care agencies. For SFY 02, 66 youth were placed in TLG settings.

Transitional Living Single/Scattered Site Apartments (TLS)

This placement option offers youth (ages 17-20), ideally transitioning from a TLP group home, the opportunity to practice life skills and prepare for the future, in an apartment setting. Youth who are considered for this type of placement must demonstrate the ability to make responsible decisions, be willing to maintain employment, and have a clear understanding of the financial and emotional demands of living independently. They must have successfully completed the life skills training. Youth in this type of placement receive support and guidance through the contracted provider. For SFY 02, 194 youth were placed in TLS settings.

Independent Living Arrangement

This placement type should be the next step in the natural progression after successfully completing a Transitional Living Scattered Site placement. Many of our youth have learned to depend on DFS and the system for their care and, thus, many have not been exposed to everyday experiences that other youth take for granted. Ideally, youth should not exit DFS custody while in a TLP placement. Although youth can learn a great deal in the life skills training provided in the classroom setting, they benefit greatly from activities in which they can practice what they learned. Youth can gain practical living experiences in this type of placement, before they exit DFS custody.

In an ILA placement, a youth lives on his/her own, usually in an apartment or college campus setting, with minimal supervision from the DFS Case Manager. A direct payment of \$307.00 per month is made to the youth who is responsible for paying all of his/her own bills and rent. The youth is expected to work and continue going to school or some type of continuing education program.

Computer Camp

In an effort to keep current with technological needs, youth are provided with the opportunity to attend computer camp. DFS contracts with Instructional Access to provide computer training and computers for youth. Twenty-two youth were selected to participate in training on Microsoft Office Professional Application Software in August 2002. At the end of the training, the youth receives the new state-of-the-art computer equipment they used during the 2 ½ days training period.

Peer Counseling

All areas of the state utilize informal peer counseling to assist foster care youth with various issues of concern. Youth may be experiencing placement disruptions, behavioral difficulties, peer pressure or other crisis or adjustments. Youth who are interested in helping can participate by helping on an individual basis or lead support groups. The goal is to prevent disruptions, behavioral problems in school or the placement setting, pregnancy and substance abuse, or other adjustments to being in out-of-home care. The youth affirm that informal

peer counseling is preferred and often more effective when the information and support they receive come from peers who have experienced and resolved similar issues.

Youth Conferences and Training Activities

The second annual Youth Empowering Youth Empowering Adults was held in July, 2002. In attendance for the three-day conference were approximately 240 youth, placement providers, case managers, juvenile court and ILP staff. This state conference hosted by SYAB members, focuses on permanency planning, communication, and other youth issues considered important and appropriate by the youth. SYAB members design, plan and facilitate all activities. This conference serves not only as a training opportunity for both youth and adults, but also allows the youth and their significant adults to interact to address needs and concerns. In addition, they can relate together on a less formal and serious setting and have fun.

Missouri was fortunate the Daniel Memorial Institute chose Kansas City, Missouri to hold their annual 2002 *Growing Pains* conference. Sixty-two adults and 45 youth were able to attend this conference.

DFS is a member of the National Independent Living Association (NILA). Missouri's Independent Living Coordinator continues to represent Region VII as a board member of NILA. ILP staff was provided with opportunities to attend in-state training related to the delivery of independent living services and issues. Each area of the state provides routine trainings outside of the regular classroom training to provide youth with additional skill building and hands on learning opportunities consistent with the life skills curriculum. Professional speakers have also been utilized to address issue specific topics with the youth.

To better ensure foster care youth are prepared to transition out of care and live successfully on their own, Missouri recognizes the need to better educate Case Managers, placement and service providers on the importance of transition planning. In 2001 we purchased the *Ready, Set, Fly! A Parent's Guide to Teaching Life Skills* through Casey Family Programs. We have used this guidebook to develop a training curriculum to be used to train staff and service providers to work with youth by addressing and understanding the issues that confront youth. Two sites, one each in eastern and western Missouri was chosen to pilot the training. The pilot training period ended by October 2002. Although the curriculum was well received, we learned our staff and provider have different and varying degree of training needs based on their experience in working with the agency and the youth. We are in the process of adapting the curriculum for staff.

Community Service

Missouri recognizes the need for youth to make a connection to and the importance of giving back to their community. Community service is an important component of their life skills training. To successfully graduate from life skills training, youth are required to perform a community service project. Each life skills class can choose their service project. Service projects can be performed as a group or individually. Service projects may include but are not limited to canned food and winter coats drives, working in food pantries, visiting nursing

homes, writing letters to foster parents during foster parent appreciation month, assisting in the planning of picnics and other special events for younger foster children.

Area Independent Living Activities

Area 1 (Northwest & Parts of Central Missouri) – Two full time ILP Specialists coordinated services for 290 ILP and 13 Aftercare youth in varying capacities with formal and informal services in 31 counties. Two contracted providers provided coordination and services for 141 youth in the Choices Program.

Three different seminars were offered in this area:

- **Life Book** – This seminar was available to all ILP and Choices age youth. Foster parents and Case Managers of the youth were also invited to participate. The purpose of this seminar is to assist in understanding the importance having a life book and documenting the ongoing history of the youth life and time in care.
- **Youth & Worker Interaction Day** – This seminar, held in a city park, gave the youth and their Case Managers an opportunity to interact together to improve their relationship. Both youth and staff value this opportunity to see and talk to each other in a positive environment. Staff was able to interact with their youth to see them as a person instead of “a case”. Youth also saw their worker as a person who has their best interest in mind.
- **Teambuilding** – This seminar is held when a large percentage of life skills groups are starting up. It allows the youth and class facilitators to get to know one another prior to the beginning of classes.

Area 1’s Youth Advisory Board meets on a monthly basis to determine service projects. Their newsletter is sent out to over 500 youth, foster parents, group homes and residential treatment facilities. The newsletter provided information on current life skills groups and contact numbers for joining groups, upcoming events, tax information, household tips, cooking tips/recipes and information on services available to Aftercare youth.

ILP staff attempt to attend as many of the Family Support Team meetings for youth when they are invited. Additional support was given in the form of \$200.00 Wal-Mart gift cards for the purchases of clothing and school supplies for youth 16 years of age and older. Ten computers were also purchased for college youth.

Thirteen former foster care youth received Aftercare services. Although more than the 13 youth contacted the ILP staff for services, only 13 of them were willing to work with staff to follow through with completing the support application or being accountable to the agreement. The 13 youth received services in the form of assistance with rent, utilities, deposits, startup items, food, household items, clothing, and referral services for mentoring or other services offered through the community.

Area 2 (Northeast & parts of Central Missouri) – Two full time and one part-time ILP Specialists coordinated services for 109 Choices, 301 ILP and 21 Aftercare youth in 24 counties. All eligible youth living in the service area had access to a training class within a

reasonable driving distance. There are no contractors to coordinate Choices services in this area. Requests for Proposals were sent out in the area on two separate occasions but no contracts were awarded due to lack of offerors to provide appropriate services.

Youth enrolled in ILP life skills or Choices classes attended presentations and field trips designed to involve them with community resources including banks, landlords, employers and others with whom they will need contact with when they exit care. ILP youth are required to open and maintain a savings account, develop job skills and relate employment and money management to other topics within the curriculum. Guest speakers from the health department, Juvenile Court, community colleges, insurance agents, bankers, DARE officers were utilized in the classroom training to discuss their specialties. A representative from Corporate America also assisted with practice interviews with youth.

Area 2 Youth Advisory Board members meet on a quarterly basis. They remained active with primary projects of participating in Child Advocacy Day at the State Capitol and assisting the planning and participating in summer conferences. Board members also participate in additional activities including speaking to foster parents at the foster parent appreciation dinners, in STARS training and advocates interested in becoming a Transitional Living Advocate. Teambuilding and life skills activities were also available for the board members and other area youth in the forms of climbing towers, rope courses, overnight and weekend retreats. Area 2 youth also benefited from the \$200.00 Wal-Mart gift cards to pay for extra clothing for school and work.

Aftercare youth received services in the form of life skills training, transportation, educational assistance, rent and utility payments, food and clothing vouchers, auto repairs, basic necessities, basic furniture and household items.

Youth residing in the eastern portion of Area 2 were excited to be part of the Jim Casey Youth Opportunity Initiative. They were active and served on the Planning Committee and worked collaboratively with adults to assist in the completion of a community plan, which has been named as the St. Louis Fostering Successful Initiative. The youth continues to work diligently to form a youth board which will play a lead role in setting project direction and advocating for the needs of other foster youth.

Area 3 (Southeast Missouri) – Two full time ILP Specialists coordinated services for 278 ILP and 12 Aftercare youth in 24 counties. Two contracted providers provided coordination and services for 241 Choices youth. Various activities provided throughout the year for ILP and Choices youth included seminars to provide hands on practice to compliment the classroom learning, summer camp and a lock-in to promote teambuilding activities, and support services. Additional services provided for ILP youth include start-up kits, educational assistance, car repairs, \$200.00 Wal-Mart gift card for extra clothing and school supplies, computer camp, state youth conference and the Daniel Memorial, Growing Pains conference.

The Area 3 Youth Advisory Board is active and busy. Three community projects for younger foster children are planned and carried out each year. The projects include mentoring, interacting with, and role modeling for younger children at different events. The majority of Aftercare services provided to youth was in forms of room and board and car repairs.

Area 4 (Southwest Missouri) - Three ILP Specialists coordinated and provided services to 967 ILP and 35 Aftercare youth in 33 counties. Three contracted Choices Coordinators organized and arranged services for 327 Choices youth. Life skills training was provided to all youth referred. Youth are offered opportunities to receive hands-on training through retreats, seminars, and camps. Two weekend retreats are offered to youth to focus on one topic they deem necessary, such as car maintenance/repair, first aid or self-defense. During these weekend retreats youth experience not only hands-on learning, but also practice other topics such as budgeting, comparison shopping and buying what they will eat during the weekend. They cook their own meals, clean, communicate, and work on other skills necessary to live with their assigned roommates for the weekend.

The Area 4 Youth Advisory Board hosted a picnic for foster parents, DFS staff and other youth to provide information and educate the picnic attendees about services available through Chafee. AYAB also participated in Child Advocacy Day at the Capitol to address their legislators on foster care and independent living issues.

An array of services was provided to youth including an educational seminar on drugs and alcohol, attendance at computer camp through Instructional Access, and participating at the state youth conference and Growing Pains conference. Many youth also received Wal-Mart gift cards for clothing and school supplies. Requests for car repair and maintenance was also a high need. Many youth requested educational and training assistance due to several colleges and universities being located in this area.

A contracted Aftercare provider visited county offices to educate staff about Aftercare services and eligibility. Services provided to Aftercare youth include paying rent and utility bills, buying food, providing transportation to complete the GED classes, assisting with college tuition and books and other support services. Services were not provided or were ceased when youth refused to complete the support application or when they did not uphold their part of the agreement.

Area 5 (Kansas City) – One full time ILP Specialist coordinated services for 274 ILP and eight Aftercare youth. One contractor provided Choices coordination and arranged services for 127 youth. In addition to the life skills and Choices training, additional activities and services included a seminar for females focusing on self-esteem. The focus of a fishing derby seminar for males was stress and anger management.

Youth and ILP staff met with the residential treatment facilities to educate them on how to involved youth in facilities with independent living services. Meetings were also held in the community to engage and share information about the Chafee. Additionally, ILP staff met with Case Managers to assist them in using the Daniel Memorial Assessment as a tool for

case planning. The ILP Specialist made herself available to provide consultation services with youth and their case managers when possible including the writing of contracts for the youth to enter into the Independent Living Arrangement. Information concerning current independent living events is included in the area foster parent newsletter.

Other youth activities included participation in two conferences: the Daniel Memorial – Growing Pains conference and the state youth conference. Youth in this area were afforded the opportunity to be on the JCYOI youth planning board and committee. One area 5 youth was also selected to be on the JCYOI national committee.

ILP and Aftercare youth received \$200.00 Wal-Mart gift cards for clothing and school supplies. Several ILP youth received driver education services, educational and training assistance, served on the Area 5 Youth Advisory Board, and received miscellaneous services as needed. Aftercare youth received room and board services, crisis intervention funds and other support services.

Area 6 (St. Louis City) - One ILP Specialist and contracted providers provide program coordination and arranged services for 315 ILP, 85 Choices, and 22 Aftercare youth. Due to the lack of space available for life skills and Choices classes, a rental facility was acquired. The rental site also serves as a resource center for youth to obtain information about various services and the use of computers with Internet access.

Chafee informational meetings were held throughout the year for DFS staff, contracted providers, Court personnel, community partners, foster and Aftercare youth to address the changes in and make referrals for life skills and Choices classes and other Chafee services. Chafee brochures were provided to community fairs and agencies who worked with this similar population of youth.

A seminar that focused on effectively relieving stress and anger consisted of teaching inner city youth how to fish. The second annual ILP Kick-Off allowed for new class participants to meet with other class participants, their instructor, former ILP participants, the Area Youth 6 Advisory Board, and the ILP staff. The youth found it to be extremely valuable to have former participants and the youth board members present to address questions about the program. A summer mentoring activity was available for Choices youth to meet with the ILP youth and youth board members.

Other services accessed by ILP youth include driver's education, tutoring, mentoring, the state youth conference, Daniel Memorial's Growing Pains conference, computer camp, participation in the JCYOI planning committee and activities, education and training assistance. One youth from Area 6 served on JCYOI's national planning committee.

A support group is in the initial stages of being formed for Aftercare youth. This will provide former foster care youth an opportunity to meet with their peers. Frequency and directions of the meetings will be determined by the youth. Other Aftercare services included room and board, crisis intervention funds, and educational and other support services including information and referral.

Area 7 (St. Louis County) – One full time ILP Specialist, one part-time staff and contracted workers provide program coordination and arranged services for 128 Choices, 240 ILP, and 26 Aftercare youth. In addition to classroom training, extensive individual services are provided to eligible youth including information and referrals, job mentoring, driver's education, tuition assistance, start-up kits, college kits, computer camp, state youth conference, Growing Pains conference, \$200.00 gift cards from Wal-Mart for clothing and school supplies. Youth are invited and encouraged to attend seminars on self-esteem and participate in Teen Talk workshops.

The partnership with Washington University's AIDS prevention project has come to a conclusion. This research project provided similar life skills training to DFS youth with the added component of AIDS prevention. Washington University will conduct nine months follow-up interviews with the youth to determine their functioning level in educational planning, and AIDS prevention behaviors. We anticipate after the interviews and at the conclusion of the project, DFS will receive a report on outcome findings comparing life skills training offered by agency staff and Washington University.

ILP staff and contracted providers are available to case managers to assist in transitional living, education and employment planning services with the youth. In addition, they work extensively with outside agencies in program development, training and other consultation services. Direct consultation with youth and adults associated with the youth's case planning is essential in providing a continuum of independent living services.

The Area 7 Youth Advisory Board meets on a monthly basis and is actively involved in youth programming both locally and statewide. Several board members are also involved with JCYOI, with one member serving on the national committee. Board members believe in the importance of meeting with representative from community agencies, the Court, state legislators and staff to improve services to youth. They are available to speak at agency and community training/ presentations, local and state conferences.

Aftercare services cover rent, security deposits, city transportation, \$200 Wal-Mart gift cards for clothing and start-up kits, crisis intervention and information and referral. Aftercare youth also had access to a graduate student intern for informal counseling services. The Aftercare Coordinator is in the process of developing a support group network for Aftercare youth, meeting with landlords and community employers to address housing and job training opportunities.

Independent Living Training and Consultation

Meeting the needs of youth is challenging, but foster care youth are more vulnerable. They need much support and resources to develop the skills necessary for self-sufficiency. They deserve the same opportunities and support as other youth and as we strive to meet those needs, ever increasing is the role of the Independent Living staff and youth leaders to advocate for empowerment and involvement. The Independent Living staff, State and Area Youth Advisory Board members continue to be available for training and consultation with Case Managers, foster parents and other placement providers, youth and the community.

Monitoring of the Division's residential child care agencies and transitional living providers continued to ensure their contractual agreement to provide independent living services and discharge planning. Programs experiencing difficulty received technical assistance and consultation from the Residential Program Unit staff.

During this past year, the State Youth Advisory Board worked very hard to update their "*What's It All About*" – *A Guidebook for Youth in Out-of-Home Care* and the Independent Living brochure to incorporate the Chafee changes. The guidebook is made available to all youth. Generally, youth are provided a copy of this guidebook when they begin life skills training or the Choices program. If they choose not to participate in life skills training, they can receive a copy of the book from their Case Manager or other DFS staff. The updated "*What's It All About*" and the Chafee brochure became available during spring 2003.

2. Record of the purposes for which funds were expended (section 477(a)(1-5)).

DFS utilized the Chafee funds to support one state level staff position and 13 ILP Specialist positions housed in county DFS offices throughout the seven administrative areas to coordinate services for eligible youth. Chafee funds are also used to support contractual services for life skills and supplement Choices training. DFS has incorporated Chafee services into a comprehensive state program, with a continuum of services for youth 13-21 years of age in care and former foster care youth who exited care at age 18 and after, but have not yet reached age 21. Each Area receives an allocation to support the Independent Living Program designed for their assigned counties. Each Area's allocation supports:

- Direct services to youth including support of youth advisory boards, life skills training, specialized training, seminars, summer camps, retreats, national, state and area conferences, education and training assistance, purchase or printing of training/resource materials for youth and individualized supportive services.
- Direct services for Aftercare youth including, security deposits, rent, utilities and utility deposits, crisis intervention funds, education and training assistance, support groups and services, and information and referrals.
- Administrative costs including life skills facilitator training and costs, training materials, equipment, rental fees, security needs and,
- Professional development, staff meetings, and travel for staff.

3. Statement regarding the extent to which the funds assisted youth 18-21 in making the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency (section 477 (a)(5)).

Services shall be used to assist youth to compliment their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility in preparation for the successful transition from adolescence to adulthood. Funds assisted youth in transition in the following ways:

- To provide opportunities for youth involvement, especially in the planning to assist them reach self-sufficiency and to understand their personal responsibility in attaining their goals.
- To improve training for youth in independent living and employment preparation.
- To provide educational, housing, and other assistance to Aftercare youth, ages 18-21.
- The annual state youth conference provides an empowering and learning experience for youth and the adults working with the youth. Support of this state conference will assist in the development of effective youth and adult networks.
- To provide financial assistance on a short-term basis to be used as a safety net.
- To provide more opportunities to practice independent living skills outside of the classroom setting through hands-on learning.

4(a). Characteristics of Eligible Population:

The following is a detailed description of the services provided and the number and demographic characteristics of the eligible population for FFY 2002.

I. Data on youth served during FY 2002

A.	Total number of youth served in custody:	Choices	<u>1158</u>	ILP	<u>2665</u>
		Choices		ILP	
a.	#Age 20			<u>141</u>	
b.	#Age 19			<u>228</u>	
c.	#Age 18			<u>399</u>	
d.	#Age 17			<u>896</u>	
e.	#Age 16	<u>25</u>		<u>833</u>	
f.	#Age 15	<u>397</u>		<u>167</u>	
g.	#Age 14	<u>421</u>		<u>1</u>	
h.	#Age 13	<u>315</u>		<u>0</u>	
B.	Number of youth served in Life Skill Classes				<u>1737</u>
C.	Number of youth served in Choices Classes				<u>1019</u>
D.	Total number of youth served in Aftercare:		<u>137</u>		
a.	#Age 20	<u>65</u>			

b. #Age 19 55

c. #Age 18 17

E. Number of youth served who were:

	Choices	ILP	Aftercare
a. Male	<u>574</u>	<u>219</u>	<u>44</u>
b. Female	<u>584</u>	<u>1446</u>	<u>93</u>
c. Black	<u>395</u>	<u>893</u>	<u>51</u>
d. White	<u>739</u>	<u>1747</u>	<u>83</u>
e. Hispanic	<u>7</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>1</u>
f. Asian	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
g. Native American	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
h. Other ethnicity	<u>13</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>

F. Number of youth who were living in a:

	Choices	ILP	Aftercare
a. Foster Home (including relative homes and Court Ordered placements)	<u>635</u>	<u>1412</u>	<u>6</u>
b. Residential	<u>508</u>	<u>778</u>	<u>2</u>
c. Transitional Living (ILA, TLA, TLP group home/scattered site apts.)	<u>0</u>	<u>345</u>	<u>80</u>
d. Institutionalized (DYS, DMH, CPS, MMRD)	<u>2</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>0</u>
e. Other (Homeless Shelter, Case closed, Adoption, Guardianship)	<u>13</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>49</u>

G. Number of youth who:		Choices	ILP	Aftercare
a.	Are Married	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>
b.	Are Parents or Pregnant	<u>3</u>	<u>106</u>	<u>46</u>
H. Youth who were in foster care for:		Choices	ILP	Aftercare
	• less than 6 months	<u>57</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>1</u>
	• less than 12 months	<u>179</u>	<u>172</u>	<u>1</u>
	• between 12 and 24 months	<u>304</u>	<u>407</u>	<u>9</u>
	• between 24 and 36 months	<u>180</u>	<u>401</u>	<u>22</u>
	• between 36 and 48 months	<u>111</u>	<u>350</u>	<u>20</u>
	• between 48 and 60 months	<u>68</u>	<u>284</u>	<u>26</u>
	• between 60 and 84 months	<u>112</u>	<u>363</u>	<u>28</u>
	• between 84 and 120 months	<u>82</u>	<u>276</u>	<u>16</u>
	• between 120 and 144 months	<u>40</u>	<u>141</u>	<u>7</u>
	• between 144 and 180 months	<u>23</u>	<u>130</u>	<u>3</u>
	• more than 180 months	<u>8</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>4</u>
I. Number of youth who at the time applied for Aftercare services:				
a.	Are homeless		<u>34</u>	
b.	Are Married		<u>7</u>	
c.	Are Parents or Pregnant		<u>47</u>	
J. Number of youth who received:		Choices	ILP	Aftercare
a.	Began Life Skills Training Group Only ¹	<u>669</u>	<u>1339</u>	<u>4</u>

¹ Youth who attended group only and no other ILP participation.

b.	Consultations with youth or others related to youth	<u>575</u>	<u>1888</u>	<u>134</u>
c.	Seminars	<u>350</u>	<u>455</u>	<u>12</u>
d.	Computer Camp		<u>20</u>	<u>2</u>
d.	Summer Camps	<u>37</u>	<u>210</u>	<u>1</u>
e.	Ropes Courses	<u>66</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>1</u>
f.	Advisory Boards	<u>0</u>	<u>137</u>	<u>3</u>
g.	ILP Graduate Continuing Life Skills Group	<u>0</u>	<u>153</u>	<u>2</u>
h.	Driver's Education	<u>0</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>0</u>
i.	Tutoring	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>
j.	Tuition/Educational Fees	<u>0</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>23</u>
k.	Mentoring	<u>0</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>31</u>
l.	Support Services		<u>1198</u>	

K. Do you offer outreach services such as newsletters, participation on community boards, to youth not receiving formal or adjunct services?

Yes X No

L. The number of youth in Aftercare who have received:

1.	Room and board	<u>53</u>
2.	Crisis funds	<u>53</u>
3.	Educational	<u>19</u>
4.	Support Services	<u>122</u>

II. Results achieved by program participants/Description of criteria employed to measure achievements for youth in custody:

	<u>FY 2002</u>	<u>90 days Post Start Date*</u>
1. Number of youth employed.	<u>763</u>	<u>760</u>
2. Number of youth who have obtained high school diploma/GED, or are still attending high school.	<u>1748</u>	<u>1753</u>
3. Number of youth who have obtained housing and/or other community services.	<u>635</u>	<u>642</u>
4. Number of youth who are attending college.	<u>85</u>	<u>103</u>
5. Number attending technical / vocational school.	<u>29</u>	<u>33</u>
6. Armed Forces	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>

* Youth in foster care are eligible and continue to receive a variety of services. Services do not end until the youth exits foster care. A mechanism is not in place to capture accurate 90 day post information. The 90 day post start date information is accurate and captures information on youth 90 days after they have began receiving independent living services.

III. Results achieved by program participants/Description of criteria employed to measure achievements for youth in aftercare:

	<u>FY 2002</u>	<u>90 days Post</u>
1. Number of youth employed.	<u>75</u>	<u>75</u>
2. Number of youth who have obtained high school diploma/GED, or are still attending high school.	<u>77</u>	<u>78</u>
3. Number of youth who have obtained housing and/or other community services.	<u>91</u>	<u>103</u>
4. Number of youth who are living independently of agency maintenance programs.	<u>43</u>	<u>51</u>
5. Number of youth who are attending college.	<u>16</u>	<u>16</u>

6.	Number attending technical / vocational school.	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>
7.	Armed Forces	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>